

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: . NOVEMBER 8, 2007  
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*  
SUBJECT: RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A LANDMARK/VAN DORN PLAN ADVISORY GROUP

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**ISSUE:** The establishment of a Landmark/Van Dorn Plan Advisory Group.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the City Council:

- (1) Approve the resolution establishing a Landmark/Van Dorn Plan Advisory Group as discussed below; and
- (2) Authorize the Mayor to appoint the members of the Advisory Group.

**DISCUSSION:** In 2004, General Growth Properties, general manager and the owner of the in-line mall stores at Landmark Mall, approached the City with a concept for the total redevelopment of Landmark Mall as an open-air mixed-use center retaining significant retail uses and adding residential uses and a hotel. In response to that expression of interest in redevelopment of the Mall, the City worked for several years with General Growth Properties to develop and to evaluate their proposal, and also to develop a plan for the Landmark/Van Dorn area that would take advantage of the opportunity presented by the Mall's proposed redevelopment.

To that end, the Planning Commission held community meetings to gather information on issues and concerns related to the Mall's redevelopment and the potential for other development along the Van Dorn corridor in accordance with the planning principles expressed in the City Council's Strategic Plan adopted in 2004. City staff undertook studies to evaluate the potential transportation impacts of redevelopment and the opportunities redevelopment presents to create a less auto-dependent and more transient-oriented transportation system and pattern of development as older shopping centers and other opportunity sites are redeveloped over time.

The redevelopment of the Mall has been delayed in part by corporate mergers affecting all three owners of the mall: Sears/K-Mart, Federated Stores/Macys, and General Growth Properties. Because each of these three owns approximately one-third of the land on which the Mall was developed, agreement among the parties is required if a coordinated redevelopment of the Mall is to take place.

General Growth Properties has indicated renewed interest in redevelopment of the Mall in recent months, and has hired a new project manager to the project. In order to work with the community to develop a plan for the area that best considers the variety of interests in the area and the variety of views about the area's potential future, it is proposed that an advisory group composed of residents, property owners and business owners, in and near the planning area, be created to assist in developing a recommended plan for the area.

Staff and consultants will provide background information to this advisory group and facilitate its discussion of issues and evaluation of options over a series of 8 to 10 meetings in the next 5 to 6 months, with the objective of bringing a proposed plan to the Planning Commission and City Council in Spring of 2008.

**Mission:**

The mission of the Landmark/Van Dorn Advisory Group will be to:

- Identify and evaluate issues, challenges and opportunities for the future of the Landmark/Van Dorn Area.
- Bring community values, knowledge and ideas into the process of creating a plan for the Landmark/Van Dorn Area that takes advantage of opportunities to improve the area in ways that provide lasting benefit to the local community and the City as a whole.
- Keep the public informed about the development of the plan by reporting back to community, and reporting their findings and recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council.

**Advisory Group Composition:**

The advisory group is proposed to be composed of from 14 to 18 members representing the following groups, and balanced approximately equally between residential and business interests:

1. Residents and residential property owners in and near the planning area. (2 to 4)
2. Representatives of community associations in Alexandria's West End near the Landmark/Van Dorn Area, including the Cameron Station Community Association, Cameron Station Civic Association, Seminary Hill Association, and Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association. (4)
3. Commercial property owners and developers within the Landmark/Van Dorn Plan Area. (3 to 4)
4. Business owners in and near the planning area. (1 to 2)
5. A member representing the West End Business Association.
6. A member representing the Eisenhower Partnership.
7. At-large members representing citywide interests. (1 to 2).

**Staff Support:**

Planning and Zoning staff will provide support to the task force, supplemented by a consultant team and staff from other departments including in particular Transportation and Environmental Services, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, and the Office of Housing; and the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership.

**Schedule:**

The advisory group is projected to meet once in November, once in December and twice each month through March or April of 2008, for a total of 8 to 10 meetings. It is anticipated that the Landmark/Van Dorn Area Plan will be prepared for review and adoption by the City Council in the Spring of 2008.

**Advisory Group Agenda:**

The advisory group will receive staff and consultant briefings and will participate in interactive problem-solving sessions at each of their meetings. The program will begin with identification of community issues by the advisory group, and information sessions on transportation, design, affordable housing, and economic sustainability and other topics that may be identified by the group. Investigation of these issues will be followed by identification of options for the future, selection of a preferred option, and working toward development of details of the plan in a variety of policy areas.

**Communications:**

Advisory Group meetings will be open to the general public and notice of meetings will be posted on the Department of Planning and Zoning's website. Planning staff will continue to notify interested parties via eNews, flyers and will explore other means to engage community members. The meeting schedule, along with all meeting presentations, meeting notes and other information that may be generated for the Advisory Group will be posted to the Landmark/Van Dorn webpage.

**ATTACHMENT:** Resolution

**STAFF:**

Faroll Hamer, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning  
Kathleen Beeton, Division Chief, Neighborhood Planning and Community Development  
Pat Mann, Urban Planner, Neighborhood Planning and Community Development

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, the revitalization of Landmark Mall and its surrounding areas is important to the economic and social health of Alexandria as a whole and to the West End of Alexandria in particular, and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to gain the advice of community members representing a variety of interests in the development of a plan for the Landmark/Van Dorn Area that takes advantage of opportunities presented by redevelopment of Landmark Mall and nearby commercial areas in a way that provides long-term benefits to residents and businesses in the West End and to Alexandria as a whole,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA THAT:

1. There is hereby established a Landmark/Van Dorn Advisory Group.
2. The Advisory Group shall consist of 14 to 18 members as follows:
  - Two to four residents and residential property owners in and near the planning area.
  - Representatives of the following West End community associations:
    - Cameron Station Civic Association
    - Cameron Station Community Association
    - Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association
    - Seminary Hill Association.
  - Three to four commercial property owners and developers within the Landmark/Van Dorn Planning Area.
  - One to two business owners in or near the planning area.
  - A member representing the Eisenhower Partnership.
  - A member representing the West End Business Association.
  - One to three at-large members representing citywide interests.
3. The Mayor shall appoint the members of the Advisory Group.
4. The functions of the Advisory Group shall be to:
  - a. Identify and study the issues, challenges and opportunities presented by the redevelopment of Landmark Mall and other major sites in the Landmark.Van Dorn area.
  - b. Based on the members' local knowledge, values and ideas, advise the staff and consultant team on options for the future of the planning area, and assist the staff and consultants in developing policy recommendations in the variety of subject areas required for a complete Landmark/Van Dorn plan.
  - c. Assist in keeping the public informed about the plan, informing groups they represent of the progress of the plan and issues raised that

are of interest to the group, and advising the Planning Commission and City Council on their analysis and recommendations.

5. Administrative and technical staff support to the Advisory Group will be provided by the Department of Planning and Zoning supplemented by staff from other City departments and agencies.
6. The Advisory Group shall endeavor to present its findings and recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council in the Spring of 2008.

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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WILLIAM D. EUILLE                      MAYOR

ATTEST:

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JACQUELINE M. HENDERSON    CMC    CITY CLERK

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MEMORANDUM

**REVISED AS OF 11/19/07**

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**STAFF:**

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5. Administrative and technical staff support to the Advisory Group will be provided by the Department of Planning and Zoning supplemented by staff from other City departments and agencies.
6. The Advisory Group shall endeavor to present its findings and recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council in the Spring of 2008.

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
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WILLIAM D. EUILLE                      MAYOR

ATTEST:

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JACQUELINE M. HENDERSON    CMC    CITY CLERK

**RESOLUTION NO. 2252**

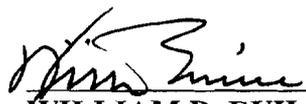
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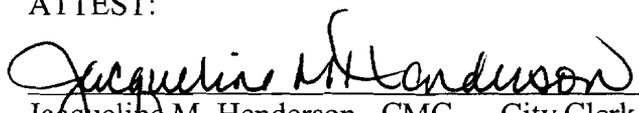
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ADOPTED: November 19, 2007

  
WILLIAM D. EULLE      MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC      City Clerk